

# LABOUR

**APRIL 1949**

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# ORGANISER

## SITUATIONS VACANT

**RUGBY C.L.P.** Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Mrs. F. Snadow, 1 Elborow Street, Rugby**, to whom they should be returned not later than 30th April, 1949.

**SOUTH EAST LEEDS C.L.P.** Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Mr. A. Harrison, 3 Birch Crescent, Halton, Leeds**, to whom they should be returned not later than 20th April, 1949.

**RICHMOND C.L.P.** Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Application forms from **L. D. Riches, Richmond Labour Party, 57 Church Road, Richmond, Surrey**, to whom they should be returned not later than 29th April, 1949.

**DEWSBURY C.L.P.** Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be had from **L. R. Smith, Ben Riley Hall, Union Street, Dewsbury, Yorks.**, and should be returned not later than April 23rd, 1949.

**HARWICH C.L.P.** invite applications for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**, the appointment to be made in accordance with the National Agreement and in consultation with the National Executive Committee. Application forms can be obtained from **Mr. J. Martin, The Eyrie, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex**, to whom they must be returned not later than April 23rd, 1949.

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**NORTH LANARK C.L.P.** invites applications for the post of **Full-time Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms from **Mr. John Aitchison, 15 Windsor Street, Shotts, Lanarkshire**, to whom they must be returned not later than April 30th, 1949.

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National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from **Mr. F. Platt, 37 Sheepwash Bank, Choppington, Northumberland**, to whom they should be returned not later than 23rd April, 1949.

**WYCOMBE C.L.P.** Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Forms upon which applications must be made can be obtained from **Stanley F. Duncie, 104 Desborough Road, High Wycombe, Bucks.**, to whom they should be returned not later than April 23rd, 1949.

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# The Labour Organiser

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## Balance of Powers

IS Labour destroying the nature of true Local Government? The Tory propagandists would have the electors believe that they are. Actually nothing is further from the truth, and it is the truth that should be brought home during the impending County Council elections.

Since Labour came to power only two functions have been removed from County Council control—the provision of hospitals and the payment of outdoor relief. Are the Tories sorry that the poor law has gone and that medicine and surgery are no longer services for ill-equipped parochial treatment?

And what about the many new powers? The County Councils now have full responsibility for Town and Country planning. Planning difficulties are decided by elected representatives of the people after discussion with the technical experts. To the county councillor goes the new powers of ensuring that the natural beauties of the countryside shall never again be blotted out at the uncontrolled discretion of the jerry builder and the billposter.

The Counties too control the new de-nationalised Fire Services, and there are big new powers for the Counties in the 1946 National Health Act.

Are we destroying the spirit of the village green? The answer is an emphatic "No". Labour has given to County as well as to smaller local authorities, powers to provide entertainments. Another new power for elected councillors.

There have been additional powers to many county authorities regarding police services, and finally the new responsibilities given to County Councils under the 1948 Children Act. Each new power necessitates Labour representation to give full meaning to the spirit of this legislation.

*Do these not compensate for the two small losses? Surely the answer is obvious. The truth of the matter is that the Tories have no policy, and that they raise up the spectre of the "Man from the Ministry" to delude local electors.*

One example of this is their new Local Government broadsheet. On the back is a large type slogan attributed to Lord Woolton. It reads "Keep Local Government Local". On the front is a large drawing of people queuing outside a tobacconist's shop. Perhaps it means that local councillors should intervene in the dollar shortage which governs tobacco imports.

But only Lord Woolton knows the answer.



# Our Records Tell Their Own Story

By JAMES BOYLE, Secretary and Agent, West Lothian C.L.P.

LOOKING through records is sometimes invigorating, sometimes depressing, but almost always instructive. Reading our records for the beginning of 1945 is undoubtedly a depressing business. They portray a party down at heel, ragged, bleakly wondering when next manna would fall. We lived on the cheap without office accommodation, the only piece of equipment being a decrepit duplicator which in its happier moments turned out something akin to a puzzle in which one is expected to find the missing word. Each time a stencil had to be cut there began a routine "tapping" to borrow the use of a typewriter.

We had only four branches of the party in a constituency with thirty electoral divisions and six burghs. Trade Union membership amounted to only 1,620 representing affiliations from twelve branches. Propaganda was practically non-existent and to ordinary people the party was in the same way. Meetings of the Executive and General Committee were held only at irregular intervals and were poorly attended.

## The Tide Turns

Our income was a mere £364 and of this £200 was contributed by one Trade Union. There was also a non-recurring back payment of £66, leaving an actual income earned by the party of £98. Returns from individual membership barely covered the cost of cards issued. Interest was at a low ebb and no one, except the ever faithful "handful" considered the party to have any future. It was they who decided to employ a full-time organiser and from then on the party began to live and breathe and to throw off its inertia.

The uphill fight began with long hours in village and town searching for the all-important comrades around which to form an organisation. They were found and in the December, 1947, issue of the *Organiser* I detailed how membership was pushed up year by year from a few members to over three thousand.

The process of welding the party

required careful thought and planning and here I make grateful acknowledgement to the *Organiser* which again and again proved fruitful for suggestions and ideas. It never failed me and from its pages I learned the value of preparation, of planning well ahead, of preparing agendas carefully for Executive and General Committee meetings, of educational activities and well planned propaganda. By the end of 1946 we had a powerful party, active and efficient. Publicity campaigns were planned on a county scale as were fetes and rallies. Local branches of the party were now centres of activity and in 1947 over one hundred public meetings were organised by them. Seldom a week passes but the local papers carry reports of things being done by the branches.

*All the time income kept steadily climbing up and up from £364 to £800 and then with loud acclamation and joy over the £1,000 mark—the first time in the party's history.*

## Membership Leaps Up

Yes, looking through records is certainly interesting and ours for 1948 picture a party full of vigour and vitality with thirty-three branches covering all aspects of party activity and all corners of the county. Individual membership has climbed to a new high level of 3,692 and trade union membership to 8,006, representing 52 branches.

This, of course, is reflected in the attendances at our meetings of the General Committee and where few attended before there is a regular attendance of upwards of a hundred delegates who carry the policy and plans of the party into almost every organisation in our constituency.

The increased extent of the organisation brought many problems, not the least being the need of central office accommodation easily accessible to our members. We searched long for accommodation to rent, but the unfortunate part of being a Labour Party is the unwillingness of property owners to rent it. Finally we bought outright, and now have our own

place well-equipped and furnished. Incidentally, when an appeal was made to them, our members met almost the entire cost of the office, thus showing the value of a good membership when such appeals are made. A full-time shorthand typist is now employed to help in coping with the huge volume of increased correspondence arising from our many activities.

#### Our Full-time Collector

To handle our membership it was decided to employ a full-time collector and although he only started duty on June 1st last year records already show that the application of business methods to the collection of membership subscriptions is an unqualified success. Very soon we hope to divide the county and employ an additional collector. Many of the objections raised to his employment have proved to be groundless and one in particular, that people would object to paying dues to a full-time collector, has been shown to be without foundation. The opposite is the truth—people are eager to subscribe to the party and welcome the collector when he calls.

By the end of 1948 the income of the party had reached £3,314, almost thirty-four times greater than the humble income of 1945.

*How was it done? How does a party build up from obscurity and poverty to prominence and well-being? How else but by planning and persistence. How else but by going to the people and asking them to support the party which has given them a new and better conception of life, a party whose records certainly deserve consideration. How else indeed!*

For  
**DAILY NEWS**  
and  
**LABOUR VIEWS**  
read the  
**"DAILY HERALD"**

## WEST NORFOLK ACHIEVEMENT

*Here's an achievement that few Constituency Parties can rival. West Norfolk reports that in April there were only just over 270 individual members in the whole of the Division, and yet by the end of the year, eight months later, individual membership had risen to 1,303. New members were obtained everywhere, and many local Parties were established as a result. It all goes to show what hard work will do and that the spirit of voluntary service, always the envy of our opponents, is as alive to-day as ever it was.*

## Round Our Locals

"**PEMBROKESHIRE** must go Left" declares the first issue of the "Pembrokeshire County Clarion"—published, appropriately enough, on St. David's Day. Special features are a Countryman's Diary, and a column in Welsh. It will doubtless play an important part in making Socialism better understood in West Wales.

Southport League of Youth certainly have enterprise, pluck and persistence. For eighteen months or so they have run their own duplicated journal, and have now blossomed out into print. "Prosper" is a very attractive and interesting little journal, about the size of "Advance." They aim at a four-figure circulation—and deserve it.

Aylestone Ward (Leicester) has also started its own printed "Labour News." Rotherham Labour Party and Wavertree Ward (Liverpool) and Raynes Park Ward make a good show with duplicated efforts.

Thorpe Ward (Southend) "New Outlook," which has been running for some months, is an excellent example of what can be done with limited resources by the application of hard work, patience and skill. An eight-page duplicated journal is enlivened with well-drawn cartoons and sketches—a picture on every page. "While we live we grow" is the slogan caption of its frontispiece of a recent issue, ingeniously depicting the "family tree" of the composition of the Southend Borough Labour Party.



# Electioneering Made Easy

By HAROLD NASH

NO Party Publication in recent years had been so eagerly awaited as the new issue of "Conduct of Local Elections."

Full-time agents, badgered by their Municipal Election candidates, agents and active workers, have time and again had to give the same answer: "Sorry it has not arrived—it is in print—we hope it will be here in a day or two"—and then uttered a few silent words under their breath about Head Office.

Well, at last it has arrived; and what a transformation! Attractively attired in a bright new cover, it invites purchase, and the layout is far superior to any previous publication in this field.

As to its contents, one cannot but congratulate the authors on bringing the book up-to-date with new ideas and new suggestions, especially in relation to the management and preparation of the election campaign.

No ordinary Party worker need have any fears as to the management of the election campaign if they follow closely the suggestions outlined in the book. The language is clear and straightforward and there is a useful index which makes reference to the various sections a matter of moments.

## Corrections

In the Head Office electoral circular recently sent to parties it was stated that a free copy of the Register for the ward or electoral area could be claimed by each candidate (see also page 7 of the "Conduct of Local Elections").

Note: This regulation does not take effect until October, 1949, but constituency parties should have got their usual free copies of the present register by customary application to the R.O.

\* \* \*

Note also page 43 of "Conduct of Local Elections"—the Civilian Proxies are limited to local elections in which postal voting is allowed, hence not in rural or parish elections.

*Everything is covered from the preparations necessary in the initial stages of election, to the final return of Election Expenses.*

To me the most important sections are those which give examples of the variety of forms which to-day face municipal candidates and agents in the conduct of their elections, and if only for this, it was worth while waiting the extra two or three weeks that Labour Party workers had to wait before receiving their copies.

## Superior To Tory Guide

One has only to compare our "Conduct of Local Elections" with the Conservative "Guide to Local Elections, New Edition 1949" to see the value of the Labour Party publication.

While the Conservative Party booklet deals in general terms with a number of things, there is not one example in the whole of its 48 pages of any form that either candidates or agents will have to use. (And by the way, the Tories are still telling their agents that they have to submit receipts for accounts from 20s. upwards).

There are two criticisms that I have to make. One is that the nomination form reproduced on page 17 for Municipal, County and Urban District Councils, differs from that on page 4 of the "Statutory Instruments, 1949, No. 210, Representation of the People (England). The form has been radically altered and no gives in place of the date of the election, the date of the publication of the notice of election.

## No Uniform Canvass System

The other criticism is that no bold attempt has been made to introduce a uniform method of canvassing which could be applied to the whole of the country. At the present time, going round from by-election to by-election, one meets completely different types of methods used for marking up the promises of electors.

*With so many new appointments of both full and part-time agents, this is the most opportune time to introduce a simple uniform system.*

*\*Price 1s. 5d., post free, from Labour Publications Department, Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1.*

# Three Years of Progress

## Achievements of a Labour Council

**T**HAT a Council can approach its electorate on election eve with a factual record of its work—devoid of propaganda—is a sign of strength and confidence.

Such is the background to "Labour's Progress in Middlesex," an attractive 16 pp. booklet prepared by the Middlesex Federation of Labour Parties.

Labour's control of this great County—it spends rates and Government grants exceeding £25 millions yearly—came at a crucial stage in its development. At a time when Westminster legislation was giving it increasing powers and opportunities. That those powers have been used widely, and the opportunities grasped, is shown in the seven sections covering subjects ranging from Health Services to Town and Country Planning.

Just what sane commonsense thinking and planning can achieve is particularly emphasised under the heading, "For the Children." Here are the practical results of Socialist thought and theory. Boarding education has been provided for about 1,000 pupils, and for the handicapped—the deaf, delicate, sub-normal, etc.—properties have been acquired for 10 homes in various parts of the country. Figures of school meals and milk make interesting reading. In the last year of Tory rule 72.8 per cent. took milk and 45.5 per cent. school meals. Under the present Council the figures are, respectively, 93.9 and 56.8 per cent. Particularly significant—and yet slipped in almost as an after-thought—are the statements that the school building programme is the best in the country and that to-day, resulting from increased grants, NO student is prevented by finance from a University education.

### The Human Touch

As the pages are turned so the facts tumble out. There are enough of them here, if properly used, to smash for a'l time any attempt to bring reaction back to the Guildhall. And it is the human touch which is particularly noticeable. The weaker members of the community sent for a recuperative holiday to rest homes—the special attention being paid to the employment

and training of tuberculosis victims—the occupational centres for mental defectives—the £2 million being spent on Community Centres—and so on.

The closing words epitomise the whole theme of this booklet: "The great difficulty of presenting a record of this nature is that statistics and facts covering the County Council's work fail to indicate the stirring human stories occurring daily in every part of Middlesex. But those whose lives are affected will read deeper into, and far beyond, these lines of cold type . . ."

This may be a book of figures and facts but it is great reading. It will inspire other Labour majorities to produce similar records and it will gladden the hearts of all who believe in Labour control locally as well as nationally.

If "Labour's Progress in Middlesex" could be in every elector's hands, "these lines of cold type" could themselves win the election. As it is our workers must themselves pass on its message.

*The booklet is obtainable from the Middlesex Federation of Labour Parties, 41, Park Hall Road, East Finchley, N.2, price 4d. post free.*

### CHANGES IN THE LAW

*It is imperative for every Election Agent to have one of these books*

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# Brighter Prospects for Would-Be Agents

By L. H. M. HILLIARD, General Secretary, Agents' Union.

SINCE writing in the November and December issues of the *Labour Organiser* on the Union's proposals for a scheme providing for the training and recruitment of Party agents, I have received very many letters from young men and women anxious to enter agency service and eager to learn that the scheme is going forward. So far I have not been able to be very encouraging in my replies but now news is brighter.

At a recent meeting of the Adjustments Board the scheme was accepted, in general terms, and suitable recommendations will be made to the N.E.C. in time to allow the scheme to operate, if not before, then immediately after the General Election of 1950. I was particularly pleased to hear "Jim" Griffiths, congratulate the Union on its proposals and I for one am convinced that its operation will prove of lasting value to the movement.

Our experience, as a union during the last year or so has undoubtedly shown the need. While it is true to say that our membership has expanded, it is also true that many of our younger and newer agents have left the service after only a few months and usually because, without previous experience of the responsibilities of agency work they

have found, after appointment, that it was not what they required or that they were temperamentally unsuited to this form of appointment.

Along with a recognised channel of recruitment providing for practical training must go a greater measure of financial security for agents in general. At some time or other the movement will have to face up to this problem if we are to get, as I think we are all agreed we should have, an agency service on a national basis with effective organising help provided in all constituencies rather than in those that have the most resources or the heaviest bank balances. As in so many other fields of Socialist policy, appointment to divisions on the basis of need should be the prime concern of the movement.

## New Life Members

At its last meeting the Union Executive Committee granted life membership to Dan Dawson, and Harold Croft amongst others. Both Dan and Harold have had a long and close association with the Union right from its earliest days and it is nice to feel that even though they are now both retired we shall keep in touch with them and have the benefit of their advice from time to time.

It is interesting to reflect upon the recognition now being accorded a number of our members who have devoted a lifetime to public service. No less than eight O.B.E.'s have recently been awarded to members of the Union and of these two have gone to members of the Executive—Joe Davies of Swansea and Dan Dawson having had this honour accorded them. I am sure members will join with me in congratulating them upon these awards which have been well earned in the service of the people.

## Blackpool Re-union

Most of the accommodation obtained for our members has now been taken up. The three hotels originally booked by the Union have been augmented by two more so it would appear that Union members find this service of value. The work involved is heavy and I write to offer my apologies to mem-

## ELECTIONS - 1949

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bers who may not have yet received confirmation of their bookings. They will all be dealt with in strict order. Preparation of the Union's Annual Report is now going forward and I hope to see this accompanied by the Brochure promised last year containing among other things the rules, as amended, and a directory of members.

Plans for the re-union dance and cabaret are now well advanced and tickets have already been issued to members. The show will commence at 7.30 p.m. in the Blackpool Co-operative Society's Albert Hall, Albert Road, Blackpool, and will continue until 11.30 p.m. More than 90 minutes of first class entertainment will be provided during the evening and there will be a running buffet, provided by the Co-operative.

The Party Chairman, "Jim" Griffiths, will be present and will say a few words, and it is hoped that many members of the N.E.C. will accept the Union's invitation to attend. The show will be open to all delegates,

Members of Parliament, and Union members and a special circular will be circulated with delegates credentials. This is probably the most ambitious evening the Union has yet staged. I am sure it will be a good evening and I hope that it will be well supported and that members will do their best to ensure its success.

### Remember Your Credentials

I have recently issued a newsletter to all members with a form of application for an Agent's Credential to Annual Conference if not attending as a delegate. This must be returned immediately if you want a credential to be issued and should be sent to me. A number of enquiries have been made as to whether I can secure "Visitors" tickets. I should explain that applications for these must be made direct to the Secretary of the Labour Party, that they are allocated on the basis of Divisional Labour Parties applying for them and that early application is desirable. The Union cannot undertake to help in obtaining these.

*The story of a Labour Journal which not only pays its way, but makes a profit each month.*

## Success of a Labour Journal

By JAMES INGLIS

"COATBRIDGE LABOUR BULLETIN" consists of twelve octavo pages, the four cover pages being differently coloured each month. The last page is taken up every month by a Co-operative Society advertisement. The other eleven pages are devoted to printed matter.

We started in April, 1947, with an order of 1,000 copies which we sold out. Since then we have made steady progress, without spectacular developments. To-day we are ordering 1,700 copies per month on the basis of January sales of 1,668. We try to work to within 50 copies, and since last September have not had more than 30 copies left unsold.

This is done by taking orders, principally from ward sections. At present these are distributed as follows: Wards: I, 600; II, 100; III, 250, IV, 190; V, 300, VI, 50; Trades Council, 70; others 72. All who order guarantee to pay for their copies, giving one month's notice when they wish to change. In this way loss and waste are prevented.

The Bulletin is sold for 2d. per copy. The printer — to whose generosity and co-operation we cannot pay too high a tribute—charges the Party £7 15s. for 1,650 copies (probably £8 for 1,700). Ward Sections and the Trades Council pay 13s. 4d. per 100, so making a modest 3s. 4d. per 100 for their own funds. Apart from this profit to the sellers, the Party makes a handsome sum each month. Including the £1 per month derived from the Co-op. advertisement, the monthly profit is now over £4, and last year's profits amounted to £44 19s. 10d., despite smaller sales at the beginning of the year, and two enlarged issues of 16 pp., sold at the usual price.

### Rewarding Work

To do all this takes a great deal of work. In Coatbridge, we feel that it is rewarding work, not merely in a monetary sense, but in a social and political sense. Nearly all our Bulletins are sold on the doorstep. A few enthusiasts sell a large number—any-

*(Continued on page 3 of cover)*

*Coats off for the general election 6*

# TWO KEYS TO

**W**ITHOUT doubt, the most encouraging feature of our work in the Party in recent months has been the evidence of a new spirit in our ranks. For too long after our victory of 1945 large numbers of our members—many of them key workers—were sitting back contemplating with pleasure the battles of the past and looking on the return of a majority Labour Government as the culmination of the Party's work. The job was finished! Now we could sit back and reap the rewards of a struggle well and truly won!

This mood lasted for almost three years, but bitter experience at municipal elections, the Tory efforts at by-elections, and at building up their funds and organisation have at last aroused most of our people from their lethargy. Slowly but surely they are recognising the simple truth that the magnificent achievements of our Government have to be defended and preserved and the way prepared for further advance by the return of our second Labour Government with power in 1950.

## Two Outstanding Problems

This re-awakening of the spirit of the Party has been dangerously delayed. At best we have little more than twelve months in which to prepare ourselves and the electorate for the battle of 1950. During this period we have much to do and various aspects of our work have been, and will be, dealt with in detail in these monthly articles. I comment only on what appear to me to be the two outstanding problems that we face.

First, the problem of Party Personnel. In these days our Conservative opponents are constantly boasting of their increased membership and for this reason it is worth while noting that our own membership has substantially

increased as compared with pre-war. In the North-West, for example, our membership has increased from 59,000 in 1938, to over 100,000.

Welcome as this progress is, it is far from good enough. Our reply to the "Woolton Million" should be a million individual members and for this reason we, in the North-West, welcome the national membership cam-

by **R. C. Wallis**

- *Membership and problems to be Secretary of Lancashire That million mem*

paign to be launched in June this year and extending over the summer and early autumn months.

*During this period every section of our Party—Divisional Labour Parties, Local Labour Parties, Wards, Women's Sections, Leagues of Youth and Trade Union Branches should rally to the task of building up the army on which we shall depend in 1950.*

## Plan of Campaign

If the campaign is to be successful plans must be prepared now. Regional Councils are working out their proposals in consultation with Head Office and every Division should, for its own



# STORY IN 1950

constituency, work out plans which will dovetail into the Regional scheme and ensure the achievement of the targets set.

Of equal importance to the increasing of membership is the location of membership. In too many constituencies we have the position where in Boroughs two or three Wards are well organised whilst others have virtually

are the two outstanding before 1950, writes the Cheshire Regional Council. st be reached.

no membership, and in County Divisions very often whole parishes and areas are without membership or contacts. For election purposes it is essential that our organisation is strong over the whole of our constituencies and during the campaign special attention must be given to weak spots if our machinery is to be efficient next year.

One point I wish to make regarding individual membership. It is, of course, important in itself. It is important for many other reasons on which space forbids comment, but above all it is important as the reservoir from which our election workers

are obtained. During the whole of my life's experience in the Party I have never discovered the organisation with enough trained election workers. I refrain from mentioning the number of Parties I have known, and know now, where resources in this field are quite inadequate.

*From existing membership, and from new members recruited this year, every party should aim to create its army of trained canvassers, committee room workers, literature distributors and other key workers without whom it is impossible to mobilise the vote which is already there to give Labour its 1950 majority.*

Later articles may deal with this and other membership matters in greater detail. I must close on this subject by saying that with a great co-operative effort, with the strong areas helping the weak and with the conviction that this work is a great contribution to success at the General Election our million members can and will be achieved and an adequate supply of workers trained.

## More Propaganda Needed

My second point deals with Party propaganda. With the new spirit in the Party we have had a rapid development of Party propaganda. More and better meetings have been held in large and small places and many Parties have availed themselves to the full of the printed propaganda provided by the national Party.

In some places, however, not enough has been done. It is a tragic thought, nevertheless true, that there are tens of thousands of homes that have received no piece of Labour literature since the 1945 General Election.

True, in most Boroughs and Urban Districts local election literature has

*(Continued on page 15)*

# Co-operation in the Ward

THE first job of a ward organising secretary should be to call a meeting of Street Leaders (where these exist) and to explain the new jobs that must be done. Unwilling officials can then drop out and others be appointed to the vacancies.

In this, the ward organising secretary must work closely with the secretary, both because the secretary probably knows Party members more intimately and because he alone (or the membership secretary) has the records of existing Party membership. In wards where the street leader system does not exist, the ward organising secretary should start right away to build up a Street Secretary organisation.

## Local Conditions

The group realises that many things will probably prevent a perfect organisation from ever being achieved. The ideal, no doubt, would be one secretary to every street or half street or unit decided upon according to local circumstances. But in streets where a good number of Party members are concentrated, the work might be given to one or two individuals, thus freeing the others for streets elsewhere. Many people do not like doing Party work in streets or areas where they are known, and this should be taken into account by the ward organising secretary.

Even if only partially in operation, the Street Secretary system would mean that in that particular area of the ward, an electoral machine is being created. It would relieve the ward organising secretary of responsibility for detailed planning in that area, enabling him to exercise general supervision over the whole ward and to concentrate on the weak areas or streets and to discover potential street secretaries for them.

*Thus, by steady, unremitting work in streets by the secretaries and by intensive canvassing in other areas, ward membership should be increased, an overall situation picture secured, and an electoral organisation created or enlarged.*

Regular meetings of the ward organising secretary and street secretaries could be arranged outside the times of ordinary ward meetings, though one

ward meeting could be arranged as a business meeting at which each street secretary would give his report. It would be the job of the ward organising secretary to keep the street secretaries up to scratch and replace the inefficient as the months went by. These ward business meetings would also be useful for the interchange of ideas and information and could provide time and place for the regular collection of subscriptions. Campaign target dates for completion of canvasses and arrangements for special canvass "parties" or "pools" could all be discussed.

## Emphasis on Expansion

During 1949, the main emphasis of Party work should be placed on this slow build-up and steady expansion programme achieved by personal door-to-door canvass. Where possible street secretaries' and canvassers' classes should be arranged, not only to outline the duties of a canvasser or street secretary, but to provide up-to-date facts and figures about the achievements of the Labour Government's work so that the Opposition mud-slinging campaign can be combated.

*Elaborate top priority campaigns with massive publicity and front-line speakers should be avoided in 1949. Let the ordinary Party work and occasional meeting, bazaar or dance go on while building up slowly from the bottom so the campaign is in full swing in 1950. Efficient machinery should enable the campaign to rise to a staged climax on polling day.*

## Undermining the Opposition

In 1949, we should concentrate on undermining the Opposition strength, especially in seats which they think they have a chance of recovering, by steady, unobtrusive spadework by our own Party members.

If we build up our machine in 1949, we can then concentrate into a few months the publicity and meetings of years, while sapping the Opposition tactics of general charges thrown at the Government by elaborate publicity with our steady personal canvass and sale of literature on the doorstep.

*(To be concluded)*



# Our New Appointments

**N**EW full-time agent for Buckingham is 29-year-old Mr. R. G. BELL-CHAMBERS, a market gardener and nurseryman, who has been a Party member for 12 years and was in control of this constituency during the 1945 General Election. He has held numerous offices in the League of Youth and the Party and has been active as a branch chairman and negotiator for W.A.E.C. employees.

Mr. W. V. COTTEE, 32-year-old clerical worker, is the new Secretary-Agent for Maldon where he has been acting General Secretary for the past nine months. He has had considerable experience of office administration as well as of Party organisation.

New full-time agent for Cirencester and Tewkesbury is 27-year-old Mr. RICHARD PRIDE, who since his demobilisation has specialised in youth work and has had considerable organising experience in the Service of Youth. He has been a trade union member for 10 years.

Mr. CYRIL SNOWDEN, full-time agent at Chippenham for the past eight months, now goes to the New Forest.

Aged 42, he has been a Party member for 20 years and acted as a sub-agent for East Dorset during the 1945 General Election and for Poole Borough Council Elections in 1945-47.

New full-time agent for Central Wandsworth is Mr. C. A. COPPER, 42-year-old toolmaker who has been a Party member for 25 years and has held various offices including those of Divisional Secretary and Borough Party Secretary.

Mr. W. J. JONES, who has been Secretary-Agent for Cannock during the past year, now moves to Wolverhampton. Aged 49, he has been a Party officer throughout his 32 years of Party membership and has had considerable experience in both Parliamentary and local government elections.

Mr. T. H. JENKINS, 46-year-old insurance agent, becomes full-time agent for Ogmore. He has had wide experience as sub-agent since 1929 at all Parliamentary elections and as agent for parish district and county council elections.

## ARDENTE

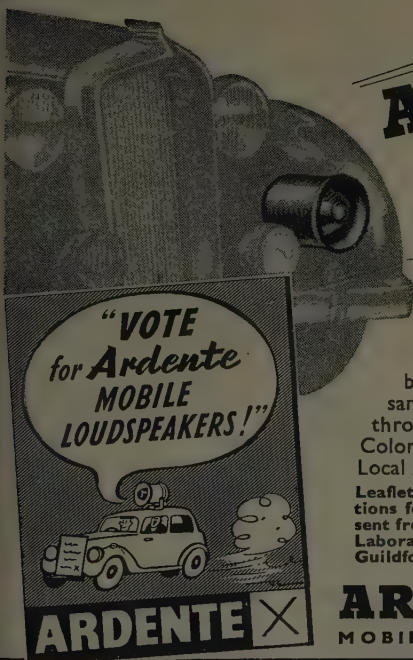
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**ARDENTE** X

A thorough canvass and a scientific "knock up" are the fundamentals of electoral victory

# How We Won South Hammersmith

By BARBAROSSA (or a Humble Election Worker).

THURSDAY, February 24, was a memorable day. Labour held South Hammersmith, and its unique by-election record remained unbroken. Thirty-one times had Labour seats been attacked and thirty-one times had the electors concerned expressed confidence in the Labour Government. The Tories put every effort into the fight, including the Churchillian circus, but to no avail, for Anthony fell and Labour rejoiced.

Any election campaign, whether successful or not, should be examined closely so that lessons may be drawn from both its good and bad aspects. The natural feeling of elation which comes with success is no excuse for forgetting to do so.

In the main the organisation of this campaign was extremely good and the best that I have personally witnessed since 1945. The election agent and his staff co-operated magnificently. They imparted a sense of urgency to all the workers and forged the will to win.

## A Thorough Canvass

The response to the appeal for workers was without question the most impressive aspect of the campaign. Their tremendous number enabled an extremely thorough canvass to be achieved and was one of the essential requisites of victory. Through this a great deal of time was given to the canvassing of "doubtfuls" by expert canvassers, M.P.s, and the like.

Canvass work was made more difficult, however, by the use of the canvass book system. Long before we had finished the canvass the books were in a terrible condition, and my confidence in the single card system was confirmed. In fact, some areas eventually discarded the books and wrote up a set of cards. Much time and trouble would have been saved if this system had been installed from the outset.

The labour force at the agent's disposal also enabled him to carry out a window bill canvass of Labour promises. This is not normally done, but the increased display of window-bills which resulted testified to its value.

The *Daily Herald* was, as always,

well to the fore in illuminating the day-by-day issues of the campaign. In so doing it pointed to one of our deficiencies. Much time was spent on the doubtfuls, but no attempt was made to brief the canvassers upon these issues before they embarked upon their arduous and often lengthy task of persuasion.

## More Use of Candidate

As all agents will explain, there is usually something wrong with every candidate. This candidate appeared to me to be as near perfection as is possible in this imperfect world. He was, however, in the early stages, not used as effectively as he could have been. We could quite fruitfully take a leaf out of our opponent's book on this matter for they tackled the candidate's canvassing much earlier and more systematically than we did. Our candidate's canvass was done far too hurriedly, was started too late, and in consequence was not completed.

There are always two glaring defects in our by-election set-up about which nothing ever seems to be done. The first is the handling of the Press. There should always be one person responsible for direct liaison with the Press at by-elections. This should as far as possible be the same person for all, and preferably a member of the Press Department at Head Office. Regular Press conferences should be held away from the general public—not in the public enquiry office of the committee-room, as happened at South Hammersmith. If a room is not available at the headquarters then it should be found elsewhere.

While on the subject of facilities, determined efforts should always be made to get spacious premises for a central committee-room even if it means leaving the traditional headquarters, adequate for normal activities but not for an expanded by-election organisation. The bottleneck of the "one telephone line" must also be abolished.

## Loudspeaker Officer Needed

The other perpetual defect is the handling of the loudspeakers. This instrument badly handled is a menace



not an asset. At South Hammersmith responsibility was tacked on to the duties of the meetings' officer instead of there being one person responsible for this and nothing else. In consequence loudspeaker cars were driven furiously around, blaring out slogans, only parts of which were intelligible to one pair of ears. They blazed a fiery trail across hostile areas, thus ensuring that the Tories were encouraged to hurry to the poll against us.

Beside the tremendous achievement of the thorough canvass, these were but minor defects. Come polling-day we knew where our support lay, the committee-rooms were well staffed, and there were hordes of workers. The whole area was thus scientifically knocked up all day until at the close of the poll only a very small percentage of the Labour promise had not voted.

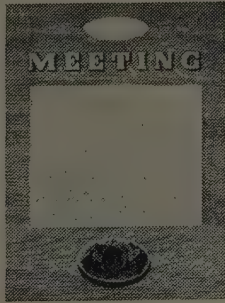
All of which points to our priorities in the coming spring elections. We must know where our support is and we must get it to the poll on the day if we are to obtain the maximum support possible. Thus a thorough canvass and a scientific "knock up" are the fundamentals of electoral victory.

## Two Keys to Victory in 1950

(Continued from page 11)

been distributed annually, but all too frequently the available Head Office publications, which have related Local to National Government have not been taken. To-day the Head Office Publications Department is producing a range of broadsheets, leaflets and pamphlets incomparably better than at any time in its history and there rests on the constituency and local Labour parties the responsibility of seeing that copies of these productions reach every house in their constituency.

This coming year must be a year of propaganda, and in the main it must be by the printed word. All excuses must be set aside. Money must be raised—workers must be rallied—plans must be made to ensure that at regular intervals, and as frequently as possible, every elector has an opportunity of considering some Labour Party literature which tells of the great accomplishments of the Government and explains the programme on the basis of which Labour will confidently ask for the renewal of its mandate at the 1950 election.



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# Be Friendly to the Newspaper Men!

By JACK CROW

**J**IM HARRIS is our local newspaper reporter. His job is to tell the people who live in my little bit of England about our whist drives, socials and football matches.

It's a job that means calls on the vicar, the Women's Institute leader, the butcher, the baker and the undertaker. From them he collects news that makes good reading in the parish.

But besides the news of your little club and mine, Jim is always on the look out for really good newspaper stories. And good stories are not always easy to find around the village street and the lanes that lead to the county town.

There is a need for good stories in every newspaper office in Britain after the whist drives, the dances, the play-readings and the mothers' meetings have been covered in full. And it's a need that every local Labour party in Britain should be ready to cash in on right away.

## Be Press Conscious

Labour Party members are not generally press conscious. They tend to be embittered and cynical about popular paper ideas of news, and every reporter can tell of cases in which news editors, snug and remote in their offices, have twisted stories to suit their particular pet angles.

That sort of thing is done in Fleet Street. But the local papers of Britain have never caught the habit. They have always kept on quietly describing what was happening in the towns and villages of the districts. And they have kept the respect of their readers.

It is true that most of them have fallen down badly on politics. Leading articles advocating the policies of a hundred years ago appear regularly in the local papers I get. These articles smell of dusty, cobweb-ridden old journalists blowing snuff from their waistcoats and dreaming of the days of Gladstone.

And some of these leading articles are not merely out of date. Many are spiteful, malicious attacks on the Labour government.

But the news columns of Britain's local papers are exemplary. There is no twisting here.

And in 1949 Labour is news. The Labour Party, Trade Unions, and the whole field of industrial relations are all front page stories to-day. All are part of Britain's great drive for recovery.

## Front Page News

Labour is on the front page of every national newspaper, regardless of its politics. The big name industrial and labour writers, Eric Whigham of *The Times*, Hugh Chevins of the *Telegraph*, George Thomas of the *Herald*, are given much space by their editors every week. Even the cheesecake-loving *Daily Mirror* has a full-time industrial correspondent whose articles regularly push human-interest stories off Page One.

*If local Labour Parties appreciate this national trend they can make a lot of useful capital out of it in their own districts. Stories about their activities will be welcomed with open arms by local reporters. Because they are good stories on their own merits.*

With local council elections on their way the parties need publicity. They can get it if they co-operate with the press in their districts. But it must be proper co-operation.

It is no good only issuing a statement when the party wants something in the paper. Reporters must be given the full facts all the time. They can be relied on to print what is interesting. And they will often find plenty of good stories which party secretaries have missed altogether.

## Appoint A Press Officer

Here is a good rule. Appoint a press officer at your local party headquarters. His qualifications should simply be these. A telephone, an up-to-date knowledge of local affairs and ability to make up his mind. For hundreds of stories are lost each year while people dither until after papers have gone to press.

And it will do no harm if he feels like taking a glass of beer with the reporters now and again.

Listen to results. A press officer was appointed at a conference held near Windsor. His report afterwards appeared in all the local papers, and

*(Continued on page 19)*



# Profile of the Prime Minister

IT is hardly fair to bring such a factual, comprehensive and concise book as Vincent Brome's new Pictorial Biography of Clement Attlee\* into the realms of petty finance, but this well-illustrated book must be one of the best "seven and sixpennyworths" on the market.

Of his own contacts with Attlee, Brome writes: "Searching for the man behind the public name was a chastening experience, and time and again I came to the brink of deep pools of personality which vanished before I could plumb them. A glimpse, revealed from a passing word or look, then the mask closed over again . . ." Writing, such as this, would be worth reading even if the subject were poor, but the subject of the progress of Clement Attlee adds a further fascination; his conversion in Limehouse is really made to live. But there was one difference. "If Attlee felt these things at a deep emotional level of understanding, if there were moments of profound consciousness when the ancient fears of the forest came up to a man who had never known them before . . . it all found outlet in unimpassioned action."

## Fateful East End Jaunt

Attlee, the seventh child of a well-known Tory household went out on "a jaunt in the East End of London, and after that the world was never quite the same again.

"Slums have three reactions upon people bred and born in quite different circumstances. Some — in extreme moments — find a horrible joy in the depths of deprivation to which the human person can be forced by merciless poverty . . . Some overcome with guilt complexes, smoothly resolve them by a little charitable work. Most are genuinely moved and shocked . . ."

*The effect upon one particular man was to change his life and to make him the leader of a great nation.*

The book is liberally illustrated — pictures from babyhood, through adversity to triumph. There are pen and camera studies of home life, army service and political life. Brome gives the impression that he has brought us close "to the brink of those silent depths of personality." He presents a new and vivid picture of a great Prime Minister which is what it claims to be — a profile.

\**Clement Attlee, A Pictorial Biography*, is obtainable from the Labour Party Bookshop, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1, price, post free, 8s.

## Paper Restrictions Relaxed

The President of the Board of Trade announced in the House of Commons on the 3rd March that the control of the distribution and use of paper was to be largely removed as from the 6th March. After that date there will be no restriction on the paper which may be used for electioneering purposes, or generally by political parties, except in the case of newsprint or of paper used in the publication of any newspaper or periodical, in which cases the existing limitations are unaffected by the changes which are being introduced.

## DEADLINE

*Don't forget the deadline for the receipt of all contributions — the 15th of the month for publication the following month.*

*That applies to advertisements as well as articles. Send them all to The Editor, Labour Organiser, Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1.*

*Let's hear what your Party is doing!*



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British Socialism is inseparably linked with the main stream of European politics. Here is a call to all Party members to help in building up and strengthening Social Democracy in Europe.

## Links with Western Europe

By ERIC RANDALL, Administrative Assistant, Labour Party International Department.

THERE may not, at first sight, appear to be very much connection between the imperturbable routine of ordinary Party activity (or even the exciting uncertainty of local elections or by-elections) and the apparently academic question of the confluence of British Socialism with the main stream of European politics. But the isolation is illusory. We cannot, even if we might think it desirable to do so, pursue the even tenor of our way indifferent to the effects and influences evinced by the European scene.

A completely fresh orientation is needed—a resuscitation of the internationalism of the old days of Socialist militancy, but without the “woolliness” of the old conception. We need, in fact, to recapture something of the spirit of the pioneers, translated into an inflexible will to strengthen the bonds of Pan-European democratic Socialism, so that thereby we may

reinforce the wider ties of universal Brotherhood.

*“Those friends thou hast, and their  
adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with  
hoops of steel.”*

### Essential Socialist Policy

This may, to some of you, savour of Utopian mysticism and to others of armchair theorising. I say emphatically that it is neither, but a necessary policy if Socialism as we know it is to survive. All our election promises, and our carrying of them into effect, must be only steps in this general direction. I would, if I may, express a truism—that our best-laid schemes will prove quite ineffectual unless we can maintain world peace and secure the conditions permanently conducive to world peace.

There is perhaps a tendency, when we are concentrating upon our own localised conflicts, and, equally, when we are making long-term plans for the next General Election, to relegate the affairs of Europe to the deeper recesses of our minds and to be content with reading the occasional glib references which occur, not every day, in the average newspaper.

What do we honestly know, most of us, about Western Union, about the Brussels Treaty, the Atlantic Pact, or the tentative machinery for a Council of Europe? Yet, in these matters, we are every one directly concerned: and both the fact of our insular vulnerability (immeasurably enhanced by the advent of the atomic age) and the proud reputation we now bear of being Europe's strongest and most energetic democratic Socialist state, give to us not only the right but the plain duty of speaking for Social Democracy to a waiting, and largely cynical, world. It is upon what we do here, and upon what we have done (which is by no means fully known in Europe), that the future of Social Democracy principally depends.

*However successful we may be in our elections our democratic Socialism,*

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for all its magnificent efficacy, could not long survive isolated and menaced in a hostile European environment. And such could be the case if Communism were to sweep like a tidal wave across Western Europe.

### All Eyes on Britain

It is vital, then, that Socialists must be agreed about Western Union—should know what it is meant to be and should help to make it what it ought to be. Our friends in the Social Democratic parties of Europe need our moral support; they, in Italy, in France, in Austria and in Germany, are confronted by difficulties (some admittedly aggravated by their own intransigence) which make our election battle here resemble a vicar's tea party. They need our help—encouragement, advice, faith; above all the story of our success told by Labour's own humble supporters, free-lance and in their own modest, effective way, is music to their ears.

It is my job to flood Europe with the gospel of British Socialism—to prove what the Communist heresy denies—that real Socialism is attainable in a democratic medium. But I need to enlist countless missionaries from the Movement here to do it. I want those who will write letters, those who will entertain in their own homes Socialists from abroad, and those who wish to travel to Europe and spend there a week, a fortnight or three weeks, among Socialist comrades. Please, all of you, write to me at Transport House.

### Be Friendly to the Newspaper Men!

*(Continued from page 16)*

three gave as much as a column to the story. Interest in Labour affairs increased remarkably in the neighbourhood after this.

*The press relations idea is not a fashionable fad of the moment. It is a real necessity for increased local party prestige. If it is done thoroughly it will mean more Labour seats on many Councils. And a comfortable Labour majority in the House of Commons in the 1950 elections.*

### Success of a Labour Journal

*(Continued from page 9)*

thing up to 200 copies. But more are sold by members taking 6, 10, 20, or 40 copies to sell to neighbours and friends.

This is useful Party work. Throughout the year, and not just at election times, 1,650 homes in Coatbridge learn that the Labour Party is alive and active. Moreover, the people in those homes have the opportunity, to speak to someone who belongs to the Party, to air grouses and to seek a remedy for grievances. This is invaluable in keeping the Party in touch with people of all kinds all over the town.

### Forum for Labour Views

What do we publish? Almost everything that comes in. We have made it clear that our paper acts as a forum for all views in the Labour movement, and no grips are barred. Thus we have always a good deal of controversial matter. This has aroused a little friction from time to time, but is generally approved, both inside and outside the Party. We aim at as much local interest as possible. Each month our sub-editor, who is also Secretary of Coatbridge Trades Council, contributes about two pages of Trade Union Notes, mostly of local interest. Burgh officials have been helpful, and Labour councillors are occasional contributors.

A word of warning. It is imperative that there should be someone on the job with experience of preparing matter for the press. Much of our material is received in very crude form and requires a great deal of editing. Indeed, some of it comes as mere suggestions or clues to be followed up and worked out.

All this, no doubt sounds very smug and self-satisfied, but that is merely due to the character of the article. With a population of about 47,000 we could sell 4,000 Bulletins with ease, with more active members. We need more contributors, a bigger paper, and more "newsy" material. But we are patient. We are growing slowly, but surely. The rest will come.

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